August 20, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

SUBJECT: Review of the 100th SRW

The OSD Review Panel conducted their evaluation of the 100th SRW PCR on 26 July 1968. The majority opinion and also the one concurred with by DIA approved the entire FY 70 program as submitted by the Air Force with the exception of a level of funding identified for the out years. This included approval of the continuation of the COMPASS ARROW drone system for 12 vehicles for FY 70. On 13 August 1968 General Carroll briefed Mr. Nitze on the 100th SRW PCR. Also in attendance at this briefing were Dr. Ivan Selin, OSD (SA), Dr. John S. Foster, DDR&E, and Col Robert Morrison, OSD (A).

At that time Mr. Nitze's only criticism of the PCR was that funds were not identified for the out years. He directed General Carroll to determine a realistic funding level for the out years, and suggested that a force mix of 20 147T and 20 147S drones should be costed out for this purpose. The next day, 14 August, General Carroll and group returned to brief Mr. Nitze. At that time, Mr. Nitze commented that inclusion of the 154 drones was in contradiction to his previous decision to terminate COMPASS ARROW and to remove the 154s from the PCD.

At a later session, exact time unknown, Mr. Nitze is reported to have stated that he desired to have an evaluation made of the TAGBOARD, SR-71, 154, 147 and U-2 programs so that he could address the total reconnaissance capability rather than make a decision on individual systems. This was followed by a memorandum issued to reflect the above guidance (Attachment 1). The memorandum states that a panel headed by Mr. Horwitz would be convened to evaluate the total reconnaissance system program prior to any decision. A suspense of 1 November was placed on the answer back to the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

The Secretary of the Air Force, in a note to Dr. Flax written on the Mr. Nitze memorandum, stated that Mr. Harry Davis could be the Air Force representative on the panel, and that the Director NRO would assign a member of his staff as the NRO representative. Due to some confusion prior to receipt of the actual memo and attached SAF note, Col Beerli attended as the Air Force representative to the panel and Col Hartley attended as the NRO representative at the first session on Monday, 19 August.

Since the evaluation panel is assigned with the task of identifying the force mix of these major reconnaissance systems and with the possible elimination of some systems, their recommendation could have a tremendous impact on the intelligence collection capability of the nation.

[redacted]
Lt Colonel, USAF